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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001632

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PRT TIKRIT: DEPUTY GOVERNOR CALLS FOR
RECONCILIATION TIMELINE WITH ODIERNO, LAMB

REF: A. BAGHDAD 507

[B](#). BAGHDAD 540

Classified By: PRT Team Lead Steven R. Buckler for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is a PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din (SaD) cable.

[1](#)2. (C) SUMMARY. Salah ad Din (SaD) Deputy Governor Abdullah H. M. Ajbarah al Jabouri called for the GOI to commit to a "reconciliation timeline" in a May 16 meeting with MNC-I CG LTG Odierno and MNF-I Deputy CG LTG Lamb. Saying "the GOI knows what it needs to do but is not mature enough to do it," Abdullah said Sunnis are looking for movement in four major areas for reconciliation: amendment of the Constitution, de-baathification reform, change in the elections process, and ethnic balance on national bodies like the Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCCI). Remarking that violence had increased in the province since the beginning of the Baghdad Security Plan (Operation Fardh al Qanoon), he said that reform in those areas would quell "most Sunni violence." Referring to successes in reducing violence in other predominately Sunni areas, LTG Odierno said initiatives like tribes coalescing to fight al Qaeda (AQI) were important to the reconciliation process. Such efforts, he suggested, demonstrated to the GOI that the Sunnis are against violence and for participation in the political process, making the GOI more likely to act on reconciliation initiatives in the political arena. Odierno agreed that through its numerous trips to Baghdad, the SaD provincial government had made good faith efforts to improve the province's relationship with the GOI and that a visit to the province by PM al Maliki would communicate the GOI's commitment to including Salah ad Din in political process. END SUMMARY.

A Follow-On Meeting on Reconciliation

[1](#)3. (C) In a side-bar meeting on May 16 during the MND-North Governors Conference (septel), MNC-I CG LTG Odierno, MNF-I Deputy CG LTG Lamb, and 3/82 Commander COL Owens met with Salah ad Din (SaD) Deputy Governor Abdullah H. M. Ajbarah al Jabouri to discuss the way forward on reconciliation and curbing violence in the Sunni heartlands. The meeting was a follow-on to February discussions between Odierno, the Deputy Governor, and the Grand Mufti (reftels).

Where the SaD Sunnis Stand on Reconciliation

[1](#)4. (C) Indicating that his opinion was the result of much discussion with members of the "resistance," the Deputy Governor began by reiterating that "the solution to Iraq's problem is a political one, not a military one." He said, "The GOI knows what it needs to do on reconciliation, but it

is not mature enough to do it." As evidence, he said that PM al Maliki hardly mentioned reconciliation in his address at the recent Sharm al Shaykh summit on Iraq. Admitting there is no clear leader or goals among resistance groups, he said the Sunni resistance, with Jaysh al Islami, Jaysh al Mujahadin, and Ansar al Sunnah recently unified under the umbrella organization "The Front for Jihad and Reconciliation," was not opposed to dialogue with the USG and the GOI. He, however, conceded that in order to bring resistance groups into the political fold there would have to be a commitment to change in the political process. He said reconciliation must be implemented by the current GOI, and not a future one, in four major areas: amendment of the Constitution to allow equal political participation for all groups, de-baathification reforms, change of the elections system to allow direct election of candidates, and ethnic balance in the major national bodies like the Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCCI). He specifically noted that the CCCI has no Sunni representation. He said that unless the USG wants to see more time wasted that it must hold the GOI to a reconciliation timeline, with clear benchmarks. If the GOI does not meet that timeline, Ayad Allawi should lead Iraq, as he is accepted by all Iraqis; he is Shia but sectarian. Remarking that violence had increased in the province since the beginning of the Baghdad Security Plan (Operation Fardh al Qanoon), he said that reform in those areas would quell "most Sunni violence."

15. (C) Noting the complexity of Iraq's problems, the Deputy Governor asserted that many issues are being played out in Iraq: tensions between Iran and the US, the problem between the Kurds and Turkey, the question of democracy in the Arab Gulf States, and issues between Syria and Israel. He said, unfortunately, the Coalition Forces and Iraq were paying the price. Highlighting Kurdish issues, he said the Article 140

BAGHDAD 00001632 002 OF 002

process has serious potential for violence. If the Kurds take Kirkuk, he suggested, there will be a Kurd-Arab war.

16. (U) The Deputy Governor gave the following list of numbers for individuals from the former Iraqi Army from Salah ad Din who have been removed from their positions or disallowed from their pensions. To his knowledge none of them have been given offers to join the new Iraqi Army.

GEN: 1
LTG: 12
MG: 104
BG: 497
COL: 560
LTC: 775
MAJ: 716
CPT: 1,026
1LT: 543
LT: 1,297
NCO: 6,972
MoD Civilians: 372
Total: 12,875

Communicating Seriousness on Reconciliation

17. (C) LTG Odierno said that much of the GOI's hesitation on reconciliation was a result of fear that the Baathists seek a return to power, with many Shia seeing "a Baathist behind every tree, or in Iraq, behind every berm." Odierno said that the GOI has been surprised by recent Sunni tribal efforts in al Anbar and Abu Graib to fight AQI. These efforts, he said, are forcing the GOI toward reconciliation by demonstrating that the majority of Sunnis are against violence and AQI and for participation in the political process. Odierno acknowledged that the situation in SaD was more complicated because of the Article 140 and Kurdish factor.

¶8. (C) Recognizing that many of the political reforms in the reconciliation process would take time, the Deputy Governor agreed small intermediate steps needed to take place and noted that through its numerous trips to Baghdad, the SaD provincial government had made good faith efforts to improve the province's relationship with the GOI. Odierno agreed and acknowledged that a visit to the province by PM al Maliki would communicate the GOI's commitment to including Salah ad Din in the political process.

¶9. (C) The Deputy Governor also suggested the CF/GOI should buy back weaponry and explosives in order to make it more difficult for terrorists to have access to the material necessary to commit acts of terrorism. He said Saddam had weapons buy-back centers opened in 1991 and cleaned up the country in three months.

Comment

¶10. (C) SaD provincial officials have no faith in the al Maliki administration's commitment to reconciliation, and they continue to be frustrated by the PM's lack of follow through on initiatives he has publicly announced. That said, they are still open to dialogue and bring up reconciliation issues every time they visit Baghdad. A visit by PM al Maliki to the province may help to keep the lines of communication between Baghdad and Salah ad Din open. END COMMENT.

¶11. (U) For additional reporting from PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din, please see our SIPRNET Reporting Blog:
<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Tikrit>.
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